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Christianity in Japan.
1859—1883.

Dissertation
presented to the Board of University
Studies of the Johns Hopkins
University for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy
by
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May 1st, 1894.

Contents.

Introduction	1
Chapter I: Opening of the Door to the Gospel	12.
Chapter II: Breaking up of the Barriers	25.
Chapter III: Indirect Obstacles to the Spread of Christianity	39.
Chapter IV: Progress of the Work	47
Chapter V: Rise of the Nationalistic Church	51.
Bibliography	69.
Author's Biography	71.

Introduction.

Christianization of Japan does not simply mean a conversion of heathens, nor an uplifting of the ignorant to a higher enjoyment of civilized life as is often supposed by the American public; but it involves a far wider question.

It is in short an attempt to reconstruct the Oriental idea upon the basis of the Occidental principle or to implant the seeds of Christian truth into already cultivated and fertilized soil; or in other words, it is another crusade of the Western nations against the Asiatic nations in a different form and from different motives.

The struggle between the Orient and

The Occident is nothing new. For centuries the East and the West regarded each other as irreconcilable enemies; and the borders of Europe were a permanent battle field between these two antagonistic forces. While they were, thus, struggling with each other, there sprang up two distinct civilizations, each differing diametrically from the other. — One, starting from the valleys of the Nile and the Euphrates, went westward through Europe and America and culminated in the Christian religion and the other rising at the foot of the Himalaya, moved eastward to the extremity of Asia, and appeared in Buddhism and Confucianism; the one characterizes a free state and the other an absolute monarchy; one is

a positive principle and the other a negative principle. These two diametrically opposed principles the twins of the world's history which fought for their supremacy for so many centuries without ever coming to peaceful terms, happen to meet again in Japan today after each has completed its civilization in its own direction. What will be the outcome of this second meeting? Will it be the renewal of the old endless struggle? Can the East and the West never be brought together under one common feeling of brotherhood? If this world was made by more than one creator if Christ's Gospel is intended only for one race of people, if the sensibilities of the Orientals and the Occidentals are so

constructed that they can not share the same feeling in religion as well as in other matters, then this pessimistic view might be true. But as we believe in one God, and one truth for all people, and as there is strong evidence gathered from different missionary fields that all men are capable of enjoying the same feeling in matters of religion, we have good reason to believe that this second meeting is the beginning of the breaking up of the barriers which have so sharply separated the East from the West; the first step towards the re-union of the sons of Adam into one household before the family altar of Jehovah after many centuries of separation.

This anticipation does not seem to

be utopian. Already it is confirmed
by encouraging signs. The world
has undergone a great change since
the two rival powers so mercilessly
contested on the boundaries of Europe.
Bitter feelings of enmity are fast
fading away, and a general friendly
intercourse is more and more
prevailing all over the world. Merchants
of London, and New York can invest
their money in the markets of Hiro-
shima, and Shanghai, today, without
exposing it to much danger; while
the educational institutions of Europe
and America have among their
alumni students of the far East.
Such prevalence of general friendly
feeling never existed before in the
history of the world.

At this favorable time, these two
opposing principles meet in that
enterprising country, Japan, where
every condition for such an undertaking
is most favorable—the country, whose
gate is wide open to any form of
faith; the country, where each one
can speak for his own religion and
criticize that of another with perfect
freedom, and where the leading men
are very little prejudiced from narrow
dogmatism and intolerable theology.

The great obstacles to the formation
of the universal kingdom of God on
earth have been, thus far, the
absence of an impartial nation, which
would serve as an arbitrator, and
the lack of mutual knowledge, together
with narrowness of mind, and

7.
prejudice. The Western people regarded everything outside themselves as "barbarism", and those of the East, in turn, boasted of their own civilization as the only genuine one, each knowing in truth very little of the other. This fact was well illustrated by an incident in the Religious Congress in Chicago, when that great Hindoo Buddhist Dharmapala, asked the audience how many of them had ever read the life of Buddha.

To this question, only five or six hands were timidly raised in response out of that ^{large} body of so called scholars and doctors of religion. From this, we can judge the ignorance in regard to ~~other~~ other religions on the part of the common people, who

nevertheless so not hesitate to denounce
everything foreign. But we hear
the people are comparatively "free
from such an egoistic exclusiveness
and they have more impartial, and
rational views in matters of religion.

Taking now all these conditions
into consideration, Japan seems
destined to be the special agent to
accomplish something never favorably
attempted before. The breaking down
of old prejudices and the fulfilling
of the great plan of the Almighty to
bring together the whole world into one
common feeling of brotherhood, and
establish a sure and simple Christianity
devoid of Western superstitions and
narrow dogmatism. Japanese
Christians themselves seem to be

conscious of this great responsibility, for their whole attitude is turning more and more toward this direction.

This is shown in their repeated attempts for church union, and the simplification of church creeds; in their aversion to the sectarian idea and narrow theology; and in their careful separation of pure Christianity from Americanism, and Europeanism.

But here the question may arise, are the native Christians able to solve such a great problem?

To answer this question, editor of the "Church at Home and Abroad" says "In their mission field in the world displays so much intellectual vigor, and offers so serious challenge to imposed dogma as Japan. At the

latest anniversary of the Church Missionary
 Society the Archbishop of Canterbury
 made the point in words as follows:
 'Well, then there is Japan. Here again,
 we see that we are on the eve of a
 discussion which may remind us
 forcibly of the theological discussion
 of the second, third and fourth centuries.
 The Japanese are a philosophically mind-
 ed people an extremely independent
 people an original people. They
 are not content to accept without
 question the results of disputes in
 the West etc.'"¹ President Kozaki also
 says on the point "Christianity in
 Japan has already reached a stage
 that no other missionary fields have
 ever attained. Their native Christians
 not only take a part in all discussions

¹ "The Church at Home and Abroad" Sept. 8/91

but they are in fact leading all kinds of discussions theological as well as practical. They are leading not only in all kinds of Christian work, literary, evangelistic, educational and charitable but they are also leading Christian thought in Japan. "1

Such being the situation the growth and development of the Japanese Christians is of profound interest not only to the Japanese and their friends, but to all who are earnestly praying for and seeking after the coming and establishment of the universal kingdom of God and His righteousness on earth.

(1) ¹⁹⁰⁰Address in the Religious Congress in Chicago.

Chapter I.

Opening of The Door.

The news of the glorious success of Commodore Perry in his famous mission to Japan, aroused great enthusiasm among the Christians in America and the question of sending out missionaries to this newly-opened country, for the salvation of which they had been praying for a long time, was earnestly discussed. But this enthusiasm was soon turned into disappointment temporarily when it was learned that Perry's treaty did not secure to the Americans the right of a permanent residence, nor the exercise of religious freedom. As

long as this right was not secured, no Christian missionary could establish a station upon the land; for the Christian religion had not been tolerated in Japan for many centuries because of a peculiarly strong prejudice which had a long history behind it.

The story of the Catholic mission in Japan — how it was introduced, and how it was expelled — is a familiar one. Suffice it to state here that the general hatred to the "evil sect" and its final expulsion originated in the fear ~~that~~ well grounded or not that the Spanish government would in combination with the Christians, form a conspiracy.

After this event, the strictest and most far-reaching system of inquisition

24.
was introduced by the government in order to extirpate every particle of the faith from the soil.¹¹³ In the first place every citizen was required to send in to the government a certificate by which the Catholic priest guaranteed "The said person was not a Christian but belonged to his parish." This was a well-learned policy on the part of the government to make the inquisition thorough. For the Catholic priests were the strongest rivals of the Protestants and consequently the most zealous crusaders, who showed no mercy to a suspected person. This ~~law~~ law was applied to all persons alike; but there was another which was applied only to those who

113 For details, see Mr. Cobden's scholarly article in the *Magazine of British History* (Historical Magazine), April, 1891 - Jan., 1892.

newly renounced the Christian faith:
it was called "Efumi", or trampling
upon the picture. By it, a person,
who had repented was required to
trample under foot the image of
the Virgin Mary or the picture of the
crucifixion to show his sincerity in
denouncing his old faith.

Two kinds of oaths were taken—
one to the Japanese deities and the
other to the Christian or barbarian
God. The former was for the Buddhist
believers and the latter for the converts
from the Christian faith to test whether
they still had any reverence for
their old God.

All books, which had any
reference either directly or indirectly
to the Christian religion, or any literature

which contained even a single word relating to God, Christ etc. were prohibited from circulation under strict censorial authority. These and other prohibitory laws were issued one after another and "A system of rules for the regulation of this inquiry was drawn up, in which the minutest details regarding the search after Christians, and Missionaries, their arrest imprisonment were carefully entered." These were not dead letters, but were practically executed with zeal.

The next step the government took was the closing up of sea ports.

As long as the foreigners were permitted to reside among the people and intermingle with them it was

(4) Dublin's Review of the introduction of Christianity into China and Japan, Transactions of Asiatic Society Vol. VI, p. 35.

impossible to root out the Christian faith. Hence all foreigners, Christian or not, were ordered to leave the country, except a limited number of Dutch, who for the services rendered to the government were permitted to remain on a small island off Nagasaki, called Dejima. The conditions on which this favor was granted were; "They shall not hold any communication with the 'kirishitan' sect, nor bring any missionaries into the country but will communicate every year any information concerning the 'kirishitan' sect which it may be desirable for his highness to hear."⁵

Thus Japan cut off the friendly relation with the Western peoples and

⁵ Transaction of Asiatic Society Vol. VI, p. 53.

became a thoroughly isolated nation. Now it seems unnatural, that such an adventurous, and progressive people living so close to the continent should have remained isolated for so long a time. But this seeming unnaturalness shows the intense hatred of the people toward the Christian religion.

Such being the circumstances, had Commodore Perry ever attempted to obtain religious toleration, or even made the slightest allusion to it, he would not have succeeded in that memorable mission, or at least he could not have opened the country without bloodshed.

Sagacious as he was, he well knew that this was the most delicate question

with the Japanese government and so he carefully limited the sphere of his negotiation to the commercial matters believing that "If to use his own words "one were prosecuted to a favorable result, the door would then be opened for success in the other." Perry's prediction was right. After his departure the appearance of many foreign fleets, the repeated warnings of the Dutch, the news of the Opium war in China a better knowledge of the Western people there and other forces combined, gradually convinced the government of the necessity of giving further concessions to the foreign powers. In 1858 Townsend Harris the United States Consul-general, succeeded in making

a new and more favorable treaty by which the Americans secured the right of residence and liberty of worship within their own settlements. Thus, the prayers of earnest Christians in America were finally answered; thus, the door was opened again for the Gospel in the fulfilment of the promise "Knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Upon the receipt of these glad tidings the missionary societies of the United States entered into the actual work at once, and sent out missionaries to the field.

The first regularly appointed missionary who appeared on Japanese soil, was Rev. J. Liggins of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America, who came to Nagasaki on the 2nd of May 1859.

(1) Rev. J. Goble, of the Baptist Free Mission Society, who arrived as a missionary in 1850, had once before in Japan in 1853-1854, but at that time he did not come as a missionary, but as one of the crew, belonging to the fleet of Commodore Perry. Hence he can not claim the honor of being the first arrived missionary.

21
He was soon followed by Rev. G. M. Williams of the same Church. This was the first permanent protestant mission established in this empire."

(Before the close of the same year, there were represented three Churches of the United States, namely the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and the Reformed in the persons of Messrs. J. Liggins G. M. Williams, J. C. Deepburn, S. R. Brown, J. F. Verbeek, and Dr. D. B. Simmons.

But the prospect was very discouraging. At the time of their arrival, the old ordinance against Christianity was still in full force, and "Missionaries soon found that they were regarded with great suspicion and closely watched, and all intercourse with them was conducted with strict

9 In the islands of Lis Choo, some Dutch naval officers established a Lis Choo Baptist Mission some years before the arrival of Perry and Dr. Bealheim and Mr. Everett, preached to the natives for many years, but this was only temporary. It was entirely abandoned a few years later. See Hawkes' Perry's Expedition, pp. 258, 572.

surveillance." Then they wished to learn the native language, "No teacher could be obtained at Kanagawa until March, 1860, and then only a spy in the employment of the government."

In short, the missionaries "were regarded as persons who had come to seduce the mass of the people from their loyalty to the 'God country,' and corrupt their morals generally."

It was about this time that one of the foremost statesmen, Mr. Kido, defined a missionary as "a man who is sent to Japan to teach the Japanese to break the laws of their country."

In such a state of affairs, the propagation of the Gospel was of course out of hope. Mr. Williams letter of

(1) See Proceedings of the Osaka Conference, pp. 30, 31.

(2) Adams' History of Japan Vol. II, p. 146.

June 18, 1861 illustrates the situation of the time, when he said, "There is no proper missionary work to report." It may appear singular, that so little has been accomplished, but the peculiar difficulties of our situation — the antecedents of Christianity in Japan, the jealousy of government, the sweeping clause in the treaty, that "Americans shall not do anything calculated to excite religious animosity," the ramifications of the system of espionage reaching everywhere alike, the cottage of the poor, and the "forbidden inclosure" of the "son of Heaven" — should all be kept in mind. When all these things are fully comprehended, it will be seen that great caution is

(10) The Imperial Palace was so called.

(11) The Mikado was considered the direct descendant of gods.

necessary. A false step may be fatal, and surround us with such a host of spies, that intercourse with the people will be virtually cut off."

Chapter II. Breaking up of the Barriers.

Obstacles, so numerous and systematic to the advancement of Christianity, seem at first sight to be almost unconquerable. Indeed, among some Christian communities in the United States, the discouragement became so intense at one time, that serious doubts were entertained as to the expediency of having sent out missionaries to a but partially opened country.⁽¹⁾ But a careful survey of the real nature of the obstacles will soon convince us that they were not so formidable as they seemed. The Japanese, as a nation, are com-

(1) See *Proceedings of the Osaka Conference*, 36.

paratively free from religious fanaticism. They did not hate the Christians so much as a religion. In other words, it was not religious fanaticism, but political intolerance which made them regard Christians as a national enemy.¹ This fact was sharply observed as early as 1854 by the Chaplain of Perry's fleet Rev. Mr. Cones whose statement sounded prophetic. He said, in answer to the question as to the prospect of converting Christianity to the Japanese, ~~there~~ "I fear from governmental influence. I think there would be no great difficulty in introducing Christianity. I performed funeral services on shore four times; once at Yokohama, twice at Hakodate and once at Simoda; in

1) In an address, inviting the united prayer of the Christians at home, the pioneer missionaries of the Church Missionary Society said in 1866: "contrary to the general expectation, it has been found that the Japanese generally do not entertain a feeling of hostility to foreigners, nor are they bigoted in religious. They even pride themselves in being less stiff."

2) See Adams History of Japan, Vol. II, 140.

every instance in the presence of Japanese,
and in most, when large numbers were
collected. They always behaved well.

I thus became known among the people
everywhere as a Christian clergyman,
or, to follow their sign for designating
me, as a 'praying man.' Instead of
this producing a shrinking from me
as I had supposed it would I found
that I had decidedly gained by it in
their respect and then among officials
as well as commoners.----- There
was no seeming aversion to me because
I was a minister of Christianity. The
government, however, beyond all doubt,
is exceedingly jealous about our religion
but the Japanese officials, as well
as the people, are so inquisitive, and
so observant of all that comes within

their reach, that, doubtless, after a time, they might be brought to see the difference between ourselves and the Romanists."¹⁴

Thus we can see that the real nature of the obstacles was accidental rather than inherent; political rather than religious. Things political cannot, by their own nature, be so tenacious and permanent as things religious. They are subject to change according to the conditions of the times. Therefore, while the hope for the success of Christianity in Japan was buried in almost midnight darkness, the dawn of a better time was slowly and unobservedly approaching upon the missionaries from unexpected quarters and the barriers against Christianity.

(14) Hawke's Perry's Expedition, 516.

strong as the walls of Jericho quickly fell from within by the pressure of the necessities of the time.

The forces, which brought about this innovation in the public opinion, were many; but the following are the principal ones.

I. The Bombardment of Nagashima and Shimonoseki. On the refusal of indemnity for the wrong perpetrated by the retainers of the prince of Satsuma to a certain Englishman named Richardson the British war-ships appeared off Nagashima on the 12th of August, 1854, and bombarded the city. In spite of the heroic defence of the Samurai, the city was reduced to ashes, and the required indemnity⁵ was extorted. Shimonoseki

(5) \$500,000 from the Shogunate, and \$125,000 from the prince of Satsuma.

also met with the same treatment from the combined forces of the United States, England, France, and Holland.

These events opened the eyes of the proud samurai, who, heretofore had thought the expulsion of the "barbarians" an easy task, convinced them of the superiority of the Western weapons and art of war and converted them into earnest advocates of the Western civilization.

II. The awakening of a nationalistic spirit. Just at this time, a great nationalistic spirit was roused among the people because of the presence of so many foreign enemies. As is generally the case at such a time, everything foreign was regarded as something unpatriotic.

This sentiment became so high, that the statesmen of the time, most ridiculous to say, entertained the idea of creating a purely Japanese religion by the hand of the government. Buddhism, being also of foreign origin, and a close ally of the Shogunate was likewise despised by the patriots. Did not only did it lose the patronage of the government after the Restoration, but was finally dispossessed of that important function of giving a religious certificate to every citizen, which once rendered such efficient service in the detection of Christians.⁷ Thus, the very weapon, which was intended to weaken the foreign influence, strange as it may seem, struck

(6) See the "Kokumin no Tomo" ("the Nation's Friend"), Nov. 3rd, 1893.

(7) Anecdote of Count Okuma, appeared in the "Hochi Shinbun", Sept., 1893.

off one of the barriers between
of Christianity.

III. The Thirst after the Western
knowledge. After the country was
opened to foreigners, a knowledge of
Western affairs became necessary to
the statesmen. This led some of
the thoughtful men of the country
others in later years came to occupy
the prominent places in the govern-
ment, to the study of the English lan-
guage under the missionaries although
they regarded them as national enemies.
But the frequency of intercourse gradually
cleared away the mist of suspicion and
finally convinced them of the in-
correctness conception regarding
the real nature and purpose of
the missionaries. When these

71. Protestantism was suspected by the people equally as much as Catholicism. In 1808 a pamphlet
entitled "State of Nagasaki: the story of the last scene" was published in Nagasaki. It says: "Compared
with the Roman Catholic religion, this Protestant faith is a very cunning doctrine indeed"
although they try to make out that there is nothing abominable in it, they are really users
of the same tools, and it is really more injurious than the Roman Catholic doctrine." — *Records
of the History of Japan* — Vol. II. 1911

liberal men - began to direct the national affairs the missionaries were their confidential friends and some of them were given a place in the government school.

IV. The relations with foreign powers. Friendly relations with Christian nations made it necessary for the government to respect, at least to treat their religion in a more respectful way than before.

The foreign representatives, also, exerted great efforts to secure the toleration of Christianity in Japan. When the restored Imperial government issued a new edict against Christianity, which said "The evil sect called Christian is strictly prohibited. Suspected persons should be reported to the proper officers."

21. Smith, Allen, and Gage, were the prominent Statesmen of that time, who had English under teachers Verbeek and Williams. Their efforts were successful, the "edict" later caused an disappointment in Kaiser's Government, afterward developed into the Imperial University of Japan.

and rewards will be given,"¹⁰ and when several hundred people in a village near Nagasaki, called Urakami, were arrested and imprisoned on the suspicion of embracing Christianity, the foreign representatives made a strong protest against this policy as opposed to the law of comity between nations, and as contrary to the liberal promise made at the beginning of the new administration.¹¹

"On the 18th of May" (1871), according to the *Japan Weekly Mail* "the British Envoy, Sir Harry S. Parkes, had an audience to take leave. The Mikado, as was natural, made use of the ordinary expressions of regret in the public interview. Sir Harry Parkes, in reply, thanked His Majesty for his gracious words-----The

¹⁰ This edict was issued Oct. 23, 1868.

¹¹ See Anecdote of Count Okuma in the "Hochi Shimbun", Sept. 1893.

speech ended with the usual expression of a hope that the efforts must be spared many years to conclude the reforms he had so happily commenced. As a special mark of esteem the British Minister was also invited to a private audience in one of the pavilions in the park attached to the Palace. Advantage was taken on both sides to speak with less formality than the etiquette of public audiences requires. He (Parkes) then recommended the Mikado to place full confidence in the foreigners in his employ, and he concluded by observing that there were still two spots on the Japanese escutcheon which would have to be removed before she could claim to rank with civilized countries; namely, the restriction of the

movements of foreigners within what are called the treaty limits, and the Prohibition against the exercise of the ^{"12"} Christian religion by natives.

Although these efforts of the foreign representatives had no immediate result as they wished, yet the government became exceedingly cautious in dealing religious affairs in the future administration, and the Prohibition became practically a dead letter.

V. The return of ambassadors from abroad. A special embassy, composed of the distinguished persons of the time, was sent out in 1871 to the United States, and the European nations with two objects in view, viz, the revision of the existing treaties and the invention

[12] See History of Japan, Vol. II, p. 71.

gation of social and political institutions
of other nations. Concerning the former
the embassy was a failure; but in
the latter, its success cannot be
estimated. The ambassadors
submitted to the government an
elaborate report of their observations
in which they used favorable
terms. The social and political state
of the Western nations, and the influence
of the Christian religion upon society.¹³

"Such a glowing account of the
Western people could not but affect
the subsequent administration of the
government; and this, in turn, could
not but react favorably upon the
spread of Christianity. Indeed,
while the embassy was still on its
way, that obnoxious law against

13 The bark of Japan Mission of the Richmond Mission also gave assistance to many Japanese students in the United States. "Messrs. Sawakura and Kato, during the ambassadorial tour, made an official acknowledgment to the Board of their kind assistance and good conduct," which will do more to cement the friendly relations of the two countries than all other influences combined." See Ditcher's *The United States and Japan*, 1866.

the "evil sect" was quietly removed from
the public notice-board early in 1873,
and from that time on the name
of Christian religion, though not
publicly recognized by law till 1889,
was no more molested by the state
authority.

Chapter III.

Indirect Obstacles to the Spread of Christianity.

Now the governmental opposition had at last been broken. Could then Christianity march on through the length and breadth of the empire converting the people in its own way without meeting a further opposition? Far from it. The removal of governmental interference only brought Christianity for the first time face to face with its true antagonists to begin a series of life or death struggles. The first enemy, with which Christianity had to encounter, was the peculiar mental characteristics of the Japanese. These people possess

a strong taste for abstract reasoning; hence, are directly opposed to the simple and practical teachings of Christianity. One observer will easily find this peculiarity even among the children. "I have often been little byastounded", says Mr. Dering, "at the logic-chopping power of Japanese youth of twelve or thirteen years of age." There is no doubt that this peculiar characteristics are mainly due "to the nature of education imparted." The books which infant students have been first taught to read — the Japanese Texts of Day and Time upon Time, so to speak, — have been the Confucian classics. Fancy one of our infants repeating after his teacher at his first lesson such sentences

as the following—'What the great learning teacher, is, to illustrate virtue, to instruct the people, and to rest in the highest excellence in the point where to rest being known, the object of learning is then determined etc.'⁽¹⁾ It is not to be wondered at, that to such minds, the plain account of the cross became a stumbling-block.

To stimulate this speculative tendency, many anti-Christian books of Europe and America, such as works of Herbert Spencer, Huxley, Draper, Mill, Buckle, Alexander Bain, Thomas Paine, Robert Ingersoll and others were freely introduced. Writings of this kind were exactly fitted to the taste of the naturally liberal minded Japanese. They were eagerly received and exten-

(1) See Mr. Deming's article on mental characteristics of Japanese, Transactions of the Asiatic Society, Vol. IX, Part 1, p. 18.

ly read among the young students. When, therefore, the missionaries came into contact with the people more freely, they were often placed in the most embarrassing situation by their inability to give satisfactory answers to the questions raised by the young students concerning the apparently contracted statements in the scriptures as depicted by the sceptical writers.

Another difficulty of more complicated nature inhered in the ethical idea of the Japanese. According to their conception, loyalty and filial piety are the cardinal virtues, around which all other virtues are grouped as subordinates. Now, the seeming disregard of these duties in the Christian doctrine appeared to them detrimental

to the preservation of moral order of society. Therefore many people severely criticized Christianity on this point.

The idea of death among the Japanese may be mentioned in this connection. There is a wide difference between the Japanese and the Western people regarding the conception of death and future life. To the Western people the question of future life is a very serious one, and the most indifferent are often brought to penitential tears by the threatening of the final judgement. But such a question has very little effect over the Japanese. Their great ambition being to die bravely and honorably and leave behind them a "fragrant

(14). Many books were written by the Shintoists and Confucianists, attacking Christianity on this point. Mr. Thome's "Ben Mo" was the most popular one among the students.

name", it concerns them very little what they shall be after death. At least they pretend to be too brave to think of thinking of anything else but a glorious death. Such an act, therefore, as seeking after salvation through prayer and supplication as taught in the Christian religion is regarded as something unmanly, an act of cowardice and a lack of heroic spirit. This is no doubt the bequest of the feudalism, which highly exalted the spirit of chivalry.

Closely associated with this there are many noble traits, which are woven into the fabric of society. The most striking one is the kind disposition of the Japanese toward their inferiors and readiness to espouse the cause

of the weak. In contrast with the Western idea of applying business principle to every affair of daily life, generosity forms the basis of society in Japan. Disregard of this custom on the part of foreigners often creates great trouble. Either from the lack of knowledge, or simply from a mere carelessness, or from the habit of using coloured domestics at home, some missionaries tried to employ in the treatment of the Japanese, servants, coolies and day laborers, the same iron rule to which they had accustomed. This was more than lower classes of the Japanese people, who used to an easy service, could ordinarily bear. The result was that not only ^{all} missionaries were criticized as

inhuman, heartless, and cruel in direct opposition to the doctrine, which they preach with their mouth, but their religion also was critic. It was a religion, so power even over its own ministers. It is lamentable that such thoughtless acts of a few missionaries hindered so much the cause of the religion! ⁷¹

71) I purposely omitted the opposition of the Buddhists to Christianity here; for the Buddhist religion was in a better condition about this time, being supported externally by the withdrawal of governmental patronage, and internally by the corruption of the priests & monks. Their systematic opposition to Christianity began, at the next period.

Chapter II. Progress of the Work.

It must not, however, be supposed that no successful work has been done during all these times. Before the end of 1873, beside those missions already in the field, the Baptist Free Mission Society⁽¹⁾, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the American Baptist Missionary Union, the Church Missionary Society of England, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Canadian Methodist Church entered into the country one after another, and missionary stations were established in Nagasaki, Kanagawa, Tokio, Kobe

(1). The Baptist Free Mission trusted their work in Japan to the American Baptist Missionary ~~Union~~ Union in May, 1872.

Osaka, and Hakodate.

In these places dispensaries were opened, schools were organized and the Chinese Bible and other Christian literatures were introduced, scattered and taught. Through these means the people were gradually brought within the reach of the missionaries — some prompted by selfish motives and the other honestly seeking after the truth.

The first fruit was gathered in by Rev. J. H. Ballagh, who baptized his language teacher, named Goro, in Yokohama in October, 1864.

Two years later Dr. Robert baptized two men of high standing in the south of Japan. The circumstances of their conversion were so remarkable that it is worthwhile to mention them.

briefly. Before any treaty was made with foreign powers, a British fleet entered into the harbor of Nagasaki. Amazed by the sudden appearance of the strange warship, the government ordered the neighboring daimios to send their soldiers to protect the shore, and at the same time to prevent the ship from communicating with the people. One of the commanders of the army, named Ma-bara while exploring the harbor on a small boat one day, found a small book floating on the water. He brought it back to his camp, and after inquiries, he was told by a Dutch interpreter, that it was a Bible, which teaches us about God, the creator of the universe, and His son Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. This greatly

awakened Wakasa's curiosity. Having learned that there was a Chinese translation of the same book in Shanghai China he sent for it and soon became a copy. After returning home from the service, he induced four others to join him in the study of the curious book. Later they found a teacher in Dr. Verbeck at Nagasaki. But as they could not come there in person, owing to the feudal duties, messengers were employed, "going regularly back and forth between teacher and pupils carrying inquiries and explanations as they came and went" for nearly three years. In 1866, Wakasa and his brother Ayabe were at last given a permission of leaving their services for a while. Immediately coming to

n) Wakasa died in 1872; but Ayabe is still living, and a faithful member of one of Churches in Tokyo.

Agasaki, they were baptized by a
 teacher on the day of Pentecost, May 1st.

The year 1872 is one of the memorable
 dates in the history of Japanese Christianity.
 In January the anniversary at Yokohama
 and the English speaking residents of
 all denominations united in the ob-
 servance of the Week of Prayer. Some
 Japanese students connected with the
 private classes taught by the missionaries
 were present through necessity, though
 a desire to please their teachers and
 some perhaps from a true interest
 in Christianity. It was concluded to
 read the Acts in course day after day
 and that the Japanese present might
 take part intelligently in the service, the
 Scripture of the day was translated extem-
 poraneously into their language. The

(3) For the minute account, see the "Gospel in All Lands," Sept. 1889.

meetings grew in interest and were continued from week to week until the end of February. - After week or two the Japanese, for the first time in the history of the nation, were on their knees in a Christian prayer meeting, entreating God with great emotion, with tears streaming down their faces, that He would give His spirit to Japan as to the early Church and to the people round the Apostles. These prayers were characterized by intense earnestness. Captain of one of our English and American, who witnessed the scene, wrote to us 'The prayers of these Japanese take the heart out of us.' A missionary wrote that the intensity of feeling was such that he feared often that he would faint away in the meetings.

half a dozen, perhaps of the Japanese themselves, publicly engaged in prayer; but the number present was much larger. This is the record of the first Japanese prayer meeting."⁴

As a direct fruit of these prayer meetings, the first Japanese Christian church was organized at Yokohama on March 24, 1852. It consisted of nine young men, who were baptized on that day and two middle-aged men who had been previously baptized. The members gave their church the catholic name of 'the Church of Christ in Japan' and drew up their own constitution, a simple evangelical creed, together with some rules of church government, according to which the government was to be in the hands

(4) Proceedings of the Osaka Conference, 1852.

of the pastor and elders with the consent
of his members.²⁵

In September of the following year,
there was organized with eight members
through the effort of Rev. D. Thompson of
the Presbyterian Church, the first Protestant
Church in Tokyo the nucleus of the present
San Saba Church. The members adopt-
ed the same doctrine and church-
government as those of the Yokohama
Church.

Along side with those, who directly
engaged in missionary work, there
were some, who, though not missionaries,
did a noble work for the religion.

In Kamato a group of young men
who were destined to be the future corner-
stone of the Kamato (Congregation) Church,
was, in the midst of severe persecutions,

²⁵ At meeting of the Osaka Conference 1871.

²⁶ Afterward, they became the pupils of that inspired educator, Mr. Kusunoki. They are now the pioneers of the Christian religion in Japan.

converted in 1875 under the instruction of Captain A. L. Jones, who was invited by the prince of that place to teach the pupils of his school.

The Sapporo Commercial work was done by Prof. H. S. Clark, a former student of the Agricultural College.

And one of the earliest independent churches was established by the teachers and students of the college.

As the work was then becoming more and more extensive, the translation of the Bible into the language became an imperative necessity. To meet this demand, a convention of missionaries was called at Yokohama in 1872, which resulted in the appointment of a Bible translation committee, which practically commenced

Dr. Clark came to Japan in 1876 by the invitation of a committee to organize an Agricultural College after the plan of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, of which he was then President.

its work in January, 1874. A similar committee under the name of the Tokio Bible Translation Committee was also formed on October 30th, 1876 at Tsutsji at a meeting of the missionaries of Tokio. The former committee undertook the translation of the New Testament and the latter that of the Old Testament.

"In view, however, of the number of missionaries of various denominations being much increased since 1872, the year of the Convention, which created that committee (Yokohama), it seemed desirable that some new measures be taken and arrangements made for the furtherance of the work of Old Testament translation also." Accordingly, a general convention of missionaries was called in Tokio on the 10th and 13th of Aug., 1878.

(8) See Proceedings of the Osaka Conference, 95

and there was appointed a new committee⁹, which represented all Protestant denominations in Japan, and to whose hand was to be entrusted the further work of translation and revision of both Old and New Testaments. By mutual consent, the Yokohama and Tokio Translation Committees submitted their works to this newly appointed committee, so that the translation may "come forth under the authorization of all Protestant missionaries in the country," though practically the same persons continued in the work of translation, only under a different name.

The New Testament¹⁰ was finally completed in 1881 after the labor of about five years and six months; but the Old Testament was not finished

(9) This committee was ^{called} a Permanent Committee, and were given a power to "select a committee or committees for the translation, to whom they shall assign the portions to be revised, and shall also appoint a General Revision Committee."

(10) The Yokohama Committee was requested to transfer to the committee of the New Testament when it submitted its work to the new Committee, only from Ephesians to the end of the book was left untransliterated.

till 1887.

The members of the committee who took the most active part in translation, were Drs. J. C. Hepburn, S. R. Brown, D. C. Green, and R. S. MacLay among the missionaries, and Messrs. Matsuyama, Okuno, and Takahashi among the native Christians.¹¹ Their task was exceedingly a difficult one. "In this country," said Dr. Hepburn, senior member of the New Testament Translation Committee "where from the earliest times the Chinese language and literature have had such a powerful influence upon the cultivation and language of the people, it was, at the very first, a matter of considerable anxiety in what literary style our work should be brought out, to make it most acceptable and useful. The conclusion it was desirable

(11) The literary merits of the translation largely belong to the Japanese members.

to arrive at, was not difficult to be determined: avoiding on the one hand the quasi-Chinese style, intelligible to the highly educated only, and, on the other hand, a vulgar colloquial, which, though easily understood, might make the Scriptures contemptible, we should choose that style which while respected even by the so called literate was easy and intelligible to all classes. He thus adhered to the vernacular or pure Japanese, a style which may be called classical and in which many of the best books intended for the common reader are written."

That they performed this task successfully is clear from the fact that fifteen years of progress in Christian knowledge and experience has created no demand for its revision.----- Indeed, the Japanese

(1) A part of his address given at the celebration of the completion of the translation of the New Testament at the Shin Sabae Church, Tokyo, April 19th, 1880.

Bible is already exerting something of the same influence over the Japanese language which Luther's version has had over the German tongue."¹³

¹³ Gordon's *An American missionary in Japan*, 197

Chapter V. Growth of the Nationalistic Church.

Although Christianity progressed considerably during these periods, and the number of communicants reached to 2,965 at the end of 1879,¹ yet it was not till the native workers became the active co-operators of missionaries that efficient work was done in the interior of the country, and it was not till the Japanese Christians became the leaders of propaganda that the Christian influence was felt among the people generally.

This is one of the singular features of the Japanese Christianity, which we do not find elsewhere. The

(1) Proceedings of the 11th Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Alliance of Japan, 7

truth is. That in other missionary fields, the intellectual equipments of converts are mostly such, that they naturally look up to missionaries as their superiors in all kinds of Christian work; but in Japan, a great majority of the converts are intelligent and ambitious students, who first came to the missionaries or Christian teachers with an earnest desire of acquiring Western knowledge.

It is not therefore to be wondered at that they soon came to overshadow the missionaries in all departments of work—evangelical, literary and educational. These students are mostly the men belonging to a class called Samurai. Now, the men of this class possess peculiar characteristics.

For many centuries, "They have been trained to be faithful to their feudal masters even unto death. The spirit of patriotism has been handed down among them from generation to generation. To them honor is everything; life and liberty are of no account. They are indeed the oriental knights the spirit of Japan and flame of the nation. It was they who crushed the Shogun's despotic government and restored the reins of power to the sacred personage of long secluded Mikado. It was they who cast off the old worn out Asiatic system and adopted the vigorous form of European civilization. It was they who started schools, pushed the press, cried out for reform

rights etc. They are far better educated than any other class. They are no longer ignorant slaves of dumb idols. Being strictly trained to faithfulness to their feudal masters, they will be more faithful to the Master of masters, if He is made clearly known to them. Being middle in rank, they connect both the higher and the lower. This may be the very class where we may expect to find a Saul of Tarsus."

Such importance being attached to this class, it is plain that the success of Christianity in Japan depended largely on the winning or losing of it. But very few missionaries understood this. Even if they had they would not have been able to win over the men of this class; for,

(1) Hardy's Life and Letters of J. H. Kusima, 170, 171.

"With all respect for the high motives, which may prompt most missionaries to enter the field, it cannot be denied that too many of them are far from exemplary in their methods of work, and in their intellectual equipment. So often, inexperienced young men go forth, exuberant with the hope that, with their meagre store of knowledge and experience, they may be able to convince pagan philosophy of its errors. The result is that they find their scanty college education inadequate to satisfy the intellectual demands made upon them by the better educated of the natives, and their small spiritual experience insufficient to guide the more consecrated."

It is mainly due to the genius of J. Hardy Kessima, the first native missionary, the educator, the patriot, and the reformer, that the Samurai class was won over -- through the instrumentality of his school, the first systematically organized Christian college worthy of the name, and later, by his talented pupils, whose advent marked the dawn of a new epoch in the Japanese missionary history, the beginning of the model church of future Japan.

What a providence that Christianity in Japan made its beginning so fortunately! Had it been started from the lower classes of people, who are ignorant, superstitious and consequently, dependent upon

(1) For the life of this remarkable man, see Hardy's Life and Letters of J. H. Kessima.
 (2) This school was first established in Nov. of 1875, in Kyoto, which had been over a thousand years the capital of the Mikado, and the seat of Buddhism & Shintism, and was over 2000 temples, and 10,000 priests. This school was very successful. It had developed into a university, having over five hundred students.

missionaries in all matters, the result would have been the establishment of a American and European Church with all its evils and weakness.

Or had it been introduced by the head of the state or by the higher classes through mere political motives, the future Japanese church would have been a mere gathering place of formalists and hypocrites without spirituality and regenerating power.

But it has begun from that remarkable middle or Samurai class, which was alone able to establish a strong ideal church of Christ.

Moreover, this new church received, for the first time, in the spring of 1883 a new experience even the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the

most extraordinary way, and the
young energetic Christians already
well equipped intellectually, were
thus still better prepared for the
future great responsibility.

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Biography

Masanaka Ishizaka was born in Tokio, Japan in 1861. He received his early education in both Japanese and Chinese, together with a common-branch of education under private teachers. Later, English was also added to. In 1878, he entered into the Gbomon (now the Higher Middle School of the Imperial University) but in 1880, he moved to the Tokio Anglo-Japanese College, which was then in Yokohama, and stayed with this school till 1889 at first as a pupil, and then as a teacher, and business-manager of the college. In 1889, he came to Albion College, Mich., U. S. A. and received the degree of Ph. B. in 1891. Then he came to Baltimore, and pursued the course in history and

politics for three years. His major
subject is history, and minor studies
are political economy and jurisprudence

Baltimore, May 1, 1894.



